

# ITINERARY WEST

## 8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

SATURDAY - SATURDAY



## DAY 1 – SATURDAY

### FLIGHT TO BALTRA - HIGHLANDS & FAUSTO LLERENA BREEDING CENTER



After arriving at Baltra airport, we will be greeted by our personnel to then cross the Itabaca channel and reach Santa Cruz Island for our first visit in the Archipelago: The Highlands of Santa Cruz.

We will visit one of the ranches of the area where it is possible to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat. As these animals migrate from the coastal area to the highlands and back, the chosen ranch will depend on the presence of the tortoises since they roam free and change locations. We will then head for the M/Y WildAid's Passion for lunch and to freshen up to then head back to Puerto Ayora for our second visit of the day, the Fausto Llerena Tortoise Breeding Center. Here, we will see tortoises from different islands. The animals are found in large semi natural pens for their protection, but also to ensure an easy view for the visitors. The pens are divided according to four different stages: eggs, neonates, juveniles (held here until they are mature enough to be "repatriated"), and adults. Afterward, we will head back to Puerto Ayora, where we will have some time to explore the town and shops by ourselves (this is the only chance of shopping during on this itinerary) before boarding the M/Y WildAid's Passion at around 5:00 p.m.

Once on board, the crew and captain will welcome us, have a short security drill and enjoy dinner and the briefing for the next day's activities.

## DAY 2 - SUNDAY

### PUNTA CORMORANT, DEVIL'S CROWN, POST OFFICE BAY

**AM:** We spend the day on Floreana, legendary homestead of infamous Baroness Eloise Von Wagner de Bousquet. Wet landing onto the olivine beaches of Punta Cormorant, where we will be seeking Greater Flamingos on the brackish lagoon on our way to another special beach with the finest sand you'll set foot on, a sea turtle nesting ground where sharks and rays also visit regularly. We end the outing with a short panga ride to snorkel in the Devil's Crown, an old volcanic crater and a key snorkeling site.

**PM:** After lunch, we will visit Post Office Bay (wet landing), where you can drop your postcards in the barrel as the whalers did centuries ago and select cards to hand deliver when you return home.

## DAY 3 - MONDAY

### BLACK BEACH, ASILO DE LA PAZ & AFTERNOON NAVIGATION



**AM:** This morning we will visit Floreana Island's Black Beach to learn about the intriguing human history of the island and its first inhabitants.

We will visit this fresh water source known as Asilo de La Paz, as well as the caves that served as hideouts for pirates and where the first Galapagueño was born, according to the stories of Floreana, which involve the infamous Baroness Eloise Wagner von Bousquet and her lovers who mysteriously began to disappear after settling on the island.

**PM:** After our visit, we will have the best opportunity for a not-so-common yet well-beloved activity in the archipelago, a full afternoon navigation to look for whales and dolphins. This afternoon is completed by the impressive landscapes of Isabela and the Cerro Azul volcano.

## DAY 4 - TUESDAY

### PUNTA MORENO & URBINA BAY

**AM:** We arrive at Isabela, the largest island in the Galapagos. After breakfast, we step ashore at Punta Moreno (dry landing) onto a superb pahoehoe lava flow surrounded by giant shield volcanoes, some of which are still active! From here we will do a short hike to a lagoon where flamingos are usually present.

**PM:** We disembark at Urbina Bay (wet landing) onto a black sand beach, a nesting site for green sea turtles. We take a brief hike inland in search of land iguanas and giant tortoises (seasonal) that migrate to and from the highlands.

At the beach, we will admire the remains of a geological uplift exposing coral heads and marine fossils, and if the sea conditions and time are on our side, we will also snorkel in these waters.

## DAY 5 - WEDNESDAY

### TAGUS COVE & PUNTA ESPINOSA



**AM:** Dry landing near Tagus Cove, a historical pirate hideaway where names of countless ships are recorded for posterity on the cliff face. Hike through beautiful Galapagos landscapes to Darwin Lake, a salt-water crater lagoon surrounded by tuff stone.

**PM:** We cross Bolivar Channel to Fernandina Island, one of the world's most pristine sites, and disembark (dry landing) at Punta Espinosa. Strolling along the shoreline, we will be on the lookout for flightless cormorants, Galapagos sea lions, Galapagos penguins and hawks, sooty-colored marine iguanas and bright red-orange Sally Lightfoot crabs.

## DAY 6 - THURSDAY

### PUERTO EGAS, BUCCANEER'S COVE & ESPUMILLA BEACH

**AM:** At Puerto Egas, we arrive by wet landing and disembark on a dark sand volcanic beach with a fascinating history of human settlement. With luck, we will see the Galapagos fur seals lounging on the edges of the lava fields and playful sea lions under arches of lava carved by erosion from the ocean. In these crystalline pools known as "grottos," we walk along the shore observing the abundant marine life and shorebirds they attract.

**PM:** At Buccaneer Cove we can enjoy a *panga* ride around the beautiful coastline. This place is named so as it was once a refuge for British Buccaneers who anchored here to collect supplies and clean their ships. The cove is scenic with views of the cliffs and a dark beach, and unusual rock formations known as 'the monk' and 'elephant rock.'

After Buccaneer's Cove, we are en route to central Santiago Island to disembark at Espumilla Beach with a wet landing onto golden-colored sand. This area is also used by green sea turtles as a nesting site. A trail through the forest will take us through some of the largest specimens of Palo Santo on the islands to best observe yellow warblers, the Galapagos flycatcher, and Darwin finches.

## DAY 7 - FRIDAY

### SULLIVAN BAY & NORTH SEYMOUR



**AM:** We will have a dry landing on Sullivan Bay in Santiago Island to start our walk over a recent lava flow, including very fresh pahoehoe lava formations, lava bubbles containing crystallized minerals and pioneer plants. Along the shoreline, we may find Galapagos penguins and herons going after small fish.

**PM:** We disembark on North Seymour Island directly onto this small, uplifted island. We will walk through a large bird nesting colony of the two different species of frigatebirds, blue-footed boobies, and swallow-tailed gulls. Depending on the season we will be able to watch the spectacular mating rituals being displayed.

## DAY 8 – SATURDAY

### MOSQUERA ISLET & DEPARTURE

**AM:** Mosquera is a small islet located between Baltra and North Seymour Islands, measuring about 160 meters wide and 600 meters long. We will visit this islet to view the shorebirds and aquatic life that frequent this area.

After this visit, the yacht will sail to Baltra Island where passengers will disembark and be assisted to the airport for their departing flight.